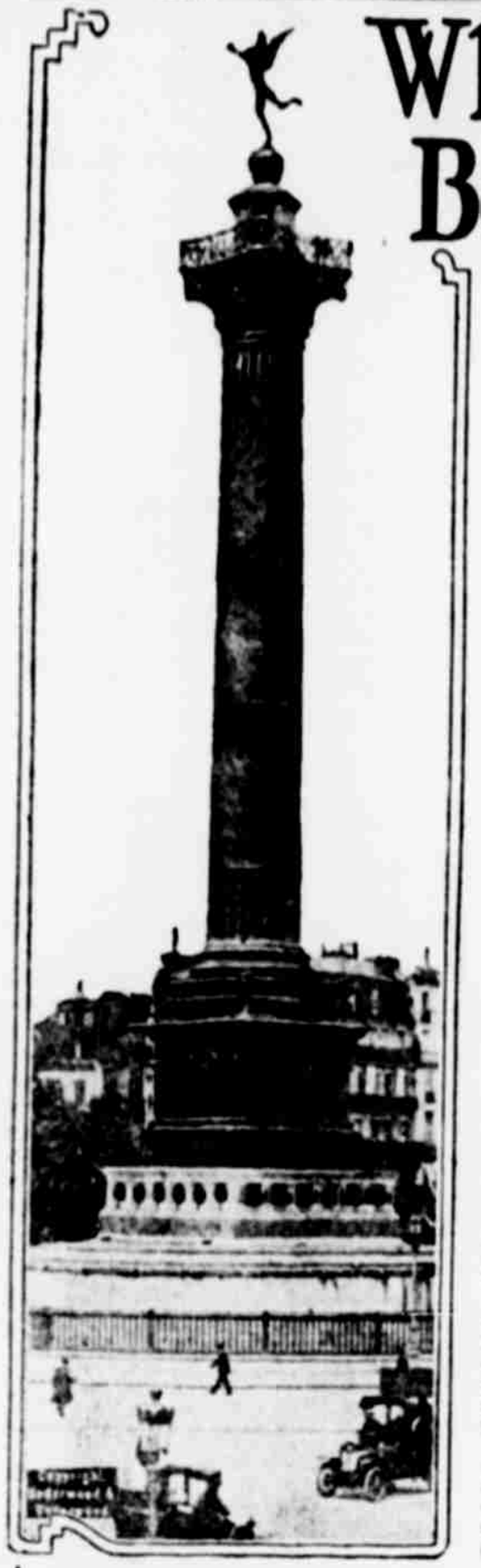
Where Liberty Was Born in France

Great Column of Freedom Marks Spot In Paris Where the Awesome Bastile Once Stood



A TALL shaft today marks the spot in France where liberty was born. This shaft marks the site of the Bastille, that black medieval prison which was demolished 120 years ago by revolutionists who, like the Americans at Lexington, caring more for liberty than life, ununiformed and poorly armed, dared to challenge the tyranny of a king.

The stirring events which culminated in the taking of France's fortress of feudalism were in motion early in July, 1789, and two great characters in the history of France and the United States were in the French capital at that very time. The Marquis de Lafayette, after consulting with Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence, presented to the national assembly a bill of rights. Had the French acted ten days sooner, as there were many indications that it might, a common birthday might now be observed by the sister nations.

The traditions of the American colonies and those of France differed so widely that to sense the true meaning of the Bastille it is necessary to trace the origin of that gloomy pile in the Faubourg St. Antoine. For centuries the edifice was the sign of the divine right of kings. Before the storm of the French revolution broke there were 50 such prisons in France, for bastille signifies merely a fortified building. As the years went by so infamous became that one which stood on the banks of the Seine and was usually known as the Castle of Paris that it took unto itself the all-embracing title of "The Bastille."

Like the institution of monarchy, of which it was the symbol, the structure was the development of centuries. The original edifice consisted of a pair of towers, and was a part of the stone barrier against the medieval Huns. Charles V about 1369 commissioned Hugues Aubriot, then provost of Paris, to enlarge the old fortification. Aubriot, having in mind the extension of the feudal power, made it both fortress and jail.

Various additions were made by the kings of France. As a fort it was considered impregnable, as the main walls at their base were 40 feet thick, and beneath the battlements, 100 feet above the pavement, the light struggled into the cells through narrow windows piercing nine feet of solid masonry. Cannon were set in the deep embrasures, and there were portholes from which archers and crossbowmen once sped the shafts of death.

To the peasantry and the common people the Bastille was all that was formidable and forbidding. A grim and mysterious stronghold, it earned year by year its evil name.

Kings with power of life and death over their subjects used it as the instrument with which to punish all who opposed them. They spared neither the high nor the low. In the days of absolutism the monarch could commit prisoners to the Bastille without any other process of law than a warrant which became known as a lettre de cachet.

This document, bearing the royal seal, was often in blank. Many lettres de cachet were obtained by unprincipled persons who either used them to punish their enemies or sold them to those who had sinister ends in view. The monstrous abuses which grew out of this practice were a blot on European history.

Courtiers, charlatans and courtesans found a way to sate their grudges. The life or the liberty of no man in all the kingdom was secure. Even in the eighteenth century notable personages might be thrown into prison because some relatives coveted their estates. In the reign of Louis XV 150,000 lettres de chachet were issued. His successor, Louis XVI, credited with being an amiable ruler, sent forth 14,500 on their missions of oppression.

It might well have been written over the entrance of the Bastille, "He who enters here, leaves hope behind." The place realized the darkest visions of Dante's Inferno. Separated from the streets of the city by a moat 125 feet wide and 25 feet deep, and accessible only by a drawbridge, it was like an Isle of the Dead.

In its noisome dungeons abominable cruelties were visited upon unfortunate prisoners, who were condemned to the rack and the boot and the wheel, or chained to pillars and flogged. There were circular cells with conical tops, in which the inmates could neither stand erect, nor sit, nor lie.

The roll of the sufferers of the Bastille is a long one. Various degrees of punishment were meted out to the prisoners, according to the whims of the sovereign. Some of them, like the Man with the Iron Mask, for a time a prisoner in the Bastille, were treated with consideration. They had bounteous meals, and were assigned to rooms in which there was a fair amount of light, and were even permitted to walk in the garden.

They had scant enjoyment, however, for they never knew when they would be doomed to the fate of their less favored fellows. Men lived 30 and even 60 years in the Bastille, until they lost all connection with the world beyond the moat.

In that world toward the close of the eighteenth century mighty changes came to pass. The line of the Louis had so impoverished the nation that the national credit was imperiled. When Louis XVI came to the throne a debt of $800,000,000 had been piled up, and it continued to pyramid. The common people had been footing the bill, and now came the proposal, strange in those days, that the nobility and the clergy, the privileged classes, should share the burden with the Third Estate.

It was a day of questioning and hearkening and soul searching. The words of Voltaire, Rousseau and Diderot were sinking deep into the national consciousness. Hence assemblies to talk over these proposals.

In vain were the prisons filled with agitators and the Voltaires sent into exile. The storm was gathering. If the monarchy was to be sustained in its extravagance and feudalism to be upheld the mailed fist must do its work. But there was more to deal with than murmuring serfs and a handful of encyclopedists. The soldiers of France, who were expected to uphold the old regime, showed that they were unwilling to kill their fathers and brothers like dogs.

The people of Paris ransacked their city until they found arms or the material for making pikes. The time had come when the rights of men should prevail, and men who are starving under tyranny are easily recruited. As the forces of the new order grew they thought with one accord of the hated symbol of that galling oppression which was the cause of all their suffering. The cry "To the Bastille!" rose from a hundred thousand throats.

Men and women armed with weapons as effective as popguns would be against a dreadnaught moved against the ancient stronghold. Bullets pattered and flattened against the massive walls. The defense was only half hearted, and the French guards on the battlements were soon waving flags of truce. A force greater than all the munitions ever made was at work—a public sentiment which had become a resistless torrent. Delaunay, the governor of the Bastille, trembled before it and surrendered. Down came the creaking drawbridge and across it rushed the infuriated citizenry. The tide flowed in and out of the dim corridors and searched out the narrow cells.

As soon as there was the semblance of government arrangements were made for removing the Bastille. The work took the contractor nearly a year, although he employed a large force. There was a thriving business in its relics, for hundreds of the blocks of stone were carved into models of the prison and sold as mementoes. Locks and bolts were distributed all over the world as souvenirs.

Although the demolition of the Bastille itself proceeded, the thing for which it stood was not so easily swept aside. Feudal Germany and Austria blocked the road to liberty. We of this day, with the perspective of a century and more of history and belonging to a nation which is even now in arms against the powers which sought to foist the yoke of serfdom once more upon the people of France, may see more clearly than even the able publicists of that period that the excesses of the French revolution grew out of desperation.

The Huns, as now, were spinning the webs of intrigue. The Teuton, then as now, living still in the middle ages domineering, mean and sordid, was determined that France should return to slavery. Louis XVI, under the influence of his beautiful wife, Marie Antoinette, was dominated by Austria. His court was filled with German sides and Prussian emissaries.

When he found that he could not conquer his people with French artillery he pretended to accede to their demands and waited for the help of the German war lords. Escaping from Paris, he had got within a few miles of the border before he was intercepted at Varennes. It was his intent to get Germany to send her armies to compel his subjects to accept his feudal rule.

Nations become accustomed to changes of government slowly when they have been ground down under the iron heels of despotism. Reckless and blind as was their king, the people of France felt that in some way he was their father and protector and that it would be a calamity if he should turn his face from them. In the months which followed when these children of the new order, knowing far less how to govern themselves than Louis and Marie Antoinette knew how to rule wisely over them, found their country invaded by Austrians and Prussians they gave way to their rage.

They had been willing to retain even so poor a king as a constitutional ruler, and he had already put upon his head the red cap. Had he been firm enough of purpose to resist the intrigues of the central powers he might still have saved his face—and his head.

Those were the days when Teuton tyranny was everywhere spreading its nets and snares. George I of England was elector of Hanover, speaking German on the British throne and knowing no English, addressing his ministers in dubious Latin. George II could talk lamely in the tongue of the people whom he professed to govern. George III was more German if possible than his predecessors. They had realized that Great Britain had a constitutional government and left affairs largely to the ministers. He, an exemplar of a middle age outlook, took the advice of his German mother, "George, be a king."

His obstinacy lost to Great Britain her American colonies. A German, he gave aid and comfort to France in seeking to make her yield to the demands of her Bourbon king. His kinsman, the duke of Brunswick, leading Austria and Prussian armies, invaded France and served notice upon her National Guard that they were liable to the death of traitors.

In their exasperation, the citizens of an impoverished nation then guillotined the king who was taking no steps to meet the foreign foe and was waiting the oncome of the Hun to subject them again to Bourbon tyranny. Hence the Commune and the Reign of Terror and those dark hours in which a nation in the throes was endeavoring to adjust itself to the problems which followed the overthrow of the Bastille.

France came up out of much tribulation into a republican form of government. She was enjoying peace and plenty when the Hun again crossed her borders to impose upon her a yoke which is the same as that for which stood the dark stronghold on the Seine long since destroyed.

JAPANESE DIFFICULT TO LEARN.

To learn to read ordinary Japanese—to say nothing of the luxury of being able to appreciate the nuances of style in Japanese composition—is the laborious effort of long years for Japanese themselves, writes "A Student of Japanese" in the New East (Tokyo). A Japanese schoolboy has to take lessons in penmanship for a matter of nine or eleven years and even then he may find himself hopelessly stumped by an oddity in an ordinary post card.

Small wonder, then, that the attempts of Westerners to learn Japanese in their own lands have been rather heartbreaking and profitless work on the whole. Yet even so, some small measure of success has been attained now and then. The old Jesuits had Japanese to teach them in their great seminary at Macao, as some of the Spanish orders had later on at Manila in the seventeenth century.

Helping the Meat and Milk Supply

(Special Information Service, United States Department of Agriculture.)

MORE WOOL FOR UNCLE SAM

These Ewes Have Been Cared for to Produce Good Fleece.

FLOCK OF SHEEP WILL HELP WOOL

Autumn Is Most Favorable Time for Making Start, Says Agricultural Department.

FLEECE NEEDED BY SOLDIER

Good Grade Ewes and Pure-Bred Ram Are Best for Beginners—Consider Class of Pasture and Feeds Available.

Sheep husbandry on farms can do much to relieve the threatened inadequacy of the wool production in the United States. The farmer who will start and care for a new flock this fall will have a patriotic part in meeting the country's need for more wool to equip our soldiers and sailors.

Late summer or early fall is the most favorable time to make a start in sheep raising. Ewes can be procured more readily at this time, and when purchased can be kept on meadows, grain stubble fields, or late-sown forage crops, to get them in good condition for breeding. Experience with the ewes through fall and winter will also render a beginner more capable of attending to them at lambing time. It is seldom possible to buy any considerable number of bred ewes at reasonable prices.

Selection of Stock.

The inexperienced sheep raiser should begin with grade ewes of the best class available and a pure-bred ram. The raising of pure-bred rams can best be undertaken by persons experienced in sheep raising. The selection of the type and breed of sheep should be made by considering the class of pasture and feeds available and the general system of farming to be followed, along with the peculiarities of the breeds and the conditions and kind of feeding and management for which each has been especially developed.

It is highly advantageous for all, or a majority, of the farms in a neighborhood, to keep the same breed of sheep, or at least to continue the use of rams of the same breed. After a decision has been made as to a suitable breed, the aim should be to obtain ewes that are individually good and that have as many crosses as possible of the breed selected. With such a foundation and the continuous use of good pure-bred rams of the same breed, the flock will make continuous improvement. In looking for ewes of desired types and breeding it will often be found impossible to get them near at home at a reasonable price. Ewes from the Western ranges can be obtained directly from a stockyard market. For the most part the range ewes are of Merino breeding. First-class ewe lambs, and less often older stock bred on the range and sired by rams of the down or long-wool breeds, are sometimes obtainable. These, or even the Merino ewes, furnish a foundation for the flock that can be quickly graded up by using rams of the breed preferred. The lambs from Merino ewes and mutton rams grow well and sell well if well cared for, but the yield is less than when ewes with some mutton blood are used. The sheep from the range are less often infested with internal parasites than are farm sheep, and in the large shipments there is opportunity for closer selection.

Young Ewes Preferred.

Yearling or two-year-old ewes are preferable to older stock. Ewes with "broken mouths"—that is those that have lost some of their teeth as a result of age—can be purchased cheaper than younger ones, but are not good property for inexperienced sheep raisers.

In buying ewes, particularly those from the range, it is desirable, when possible, to examine the udders to see that they are free from lumps that would prevent the ewes from being milkers. It is necessary to guard also against buying ewes that are useless as breeders, because of the ends of the teats having been clipped off at shearing.

Size of Flock.

Persons wholly inexperienced with sheep will do well to limit the size of the flock at the start. A beginner can acquire experience quite rapidly with 8 or 10 ewes. It is very doubtful, however, whether anyone should make a start with sheep unless the arrangement of the farm and the plan of its operation allow the keeping of as many as 20 ewes, and in most cases 40 or more will be handled better and more economically than a very small flock.

The economical disadvantage of a very small flock lies in the fact that the hours of labor are practically the same for a dozen or 20 ewes as for the larger flock. The fencing to allow desirable change of pastures or to give protection against dogs is about the same in either case, so that the overhead charges per ewe are much smaller in the case of the larger flock. Furthermore, the small flock on a farm having large numbers of other animals is unlikely to receive the study and attention really needed or that would be given to one of the chief sources of the farm income.

CLOTHE A SOLDIER

Start a new flock now and clothe a soldier boy for Uncle Sam. Twenty sheep, at least, are needed to provide wool for his hat, his shirt and socks, his underwear and blankets. How many boys are you going to keep warm?

Housing the Flock.

Equipment for raising sheep on farms need not be expensive. In mild latitudes little housing is needed, and the main need is for fencing and pastures of sufficient number and size to allow frequent changing of flocks to fresh ground to insure health. Where winters are longer and more severe, buildings and sheds are necessary to furnish protection from storms, though no special provisions are needed for warmth. Dryness, good ventilation, and freedom from drafts are the first requisites of buildings for sheep. Convenience in feeding and shepherding must also be held in mind in locating and planning such buildings or sheds.

Small flocks can be cared for in sections of barns having stabling or feed storage for other stock, but with a flock of, say, 100 ewes separate buildings are desirable. The interior arrangement of these buildings should be such as to require a minimum of labor and the least possible moving of the ewes in doing the feeding and caring for them during the lambing season. A building of this type can also be utilized for fattening purchased lambs to be disposed of before lambing begins in the regular farm flock. A good supply of feed racks, grain troughs, etc., can be provided at small expense and will save labor and prevent waste of feed.

Fall Feeding for Sheep.

Stubble and stalk fields may well form the principal means of sustenance for the breeding flock in the fall if they are used before the rains injure their feeding value. Fence strips in plowed fields may also give good grazing for a few days. Clover and grass pastures may well be left until the stubble and stalk fields have been used. For regions where the winters are open, a heavy stand of well-cured bluegrass will help very much in carrying the flock through the winter in good condition. Green rye pastures in the late fall give considerable succulence and furnish exercise for the flock. In the South velvet beans will be found of great help in carrying the flock into January.

Milk Is Nature's Food.

It is very difficult to compare foods on the basis of mineral matter they contain, but all physiologists agree that milk is very valuable from this standpoint. It is food prepared by nature especially for the growth and development of the young. A quart of milk a day is a good allowance for a growing child.